

2018 Annual Green Tier Report La Crosse County Solid Waste Department

Introduction

The WDNR accepted the La Crosse County Solid Waste Department into the Green Tier program on June 1, 2011. Located at 3200 Berlin Drive, the Department operates a waste disposal complex, which includes a sanitary landfill with a segregated cell for ash disposal; areas for recycling shingles, clean wood, cement, blacktop, tires, mattresses and yard waste; a residential drop off site and a Household Hazardous Materials disposal facility. Collaborating with Xcel Energy, solid waste from the communities in the service area is processed into refuse-derived fuel (RDF) and used to generate enough electricity to power over 10,000 homes.

Environmental Management System (EMS)

In 2012, the La Crosse County Solid Waste Department completed an EMS that was determined to meet the Green Tier functionally equivalency requirements of Wisconsin Stats. 299.83(1) (dg).

Environmental Objectives and Targets

Environmental objectives and targets provide a framework for continual environmental improvement. Following the identification of its environmental aspects and impacts the La Crosse County Solid Waste Department approved the following objectives and targets for 2018.

2018 Environmental Objectives and Targets La Crosse County Solid Waste Department

OBJECTIVE: Manage air emissions from anaerobic decomposition of waste within the landfill.

TARGET: Manage landfill activities in 2018 such as covering, liming the active area, constructing horizontal gas wells, etc. to minimize odors resulting from release of landfill gas.

Instituted several improvements.

OBJECTIVE: Manage all construction on the site to improve traffic flow, maintain safety, provide surface water treatment and minimize environmental impacts.

TARGET: Actively manage all construction on site, in 2018 through inspections, signage placement, proactive communications and best management practices. Review progress at a minimum of quarterly.

Managed as part of the design process.

OBJECTIVE: Continuously improve the diversion programs for waste generated in the La Crosse Disposal System.

TARGET: Seek opportunities to improve diversion programs for waste generated in the La Crosse Disposal System; implement as practical.

See discussion in the Environmental Performance section.

OBJECTIVE: Manage operations and quantify air emissions for HHM to improve environment and minimize hazardous impacts.

TARGET: Actively manage all change processes due to staff restructuring during 2018 at HHM to improve operations and minimize environmental impacts.

Completed

TARGET: Investigate the feasibility of conducting an emergency response exercise at HHM.

Delayed until 2019 due to staff realignment.

The annual review of the Departments environmental aspects and impacts are an important part of the Departments EMS and critical to continual improvement of environmental performance. Based on the most recent review, new objectives and targets were set for 2018. These targets are posted on the Department's website and will be discussed in the 2018 report. <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/SolidWaste/docs.asp>

Internal EMS Audit

No internal audit was conducted during 2018 due to staff realignment.

Environmental Performance

Waste Diversion

The overall waste diversion rate for the La Crosse Disposal System (LDS) decreased slightly from 32.98% to 32.16%. Single stream recycling in the Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska continues to have an impact on the diversion programs of the LDS. While single stream recycling is the right thing to do and La Crosse County enthusiastically endorses it, there has been a negative impact in the volume and quality of the waste diverted for energy recovery at the Xcel facility. The Department's waste diversion goal is only a measure of the diversion of waste that is received by the LDS. While diversion at La Crosse Disposal System facilities is lower than in its peak years, La Crosse County believes that the overall diversion of waste within the county is increasing.

In 2018, LDS working with a local recycler to implement collection and recycling of mattresses. 61 tons of mattresses were collected at the La Crosse County Landfill and delivered for recycling.

Recycling of shingles, concrete and asphalt fluctuates based on the construction activity in the area. Because these are heavy materials, changes in their volume can cause a significant variation in the landfills diversion rate. There has been an overall downward trend in recycling of these materials at the La Crosse County landfill. At the same time, other entities have increased the recycling of these materials. At this time, the county does not have the data to quantify this trend.

The diversion at the Household Hazardous Materials (HHM) program is included in the diverted materials report. In 2018, the diversion rate at HHM was 70%. This includes approximately 66,000 pounds of usable materials distributed to the public through the reuse program.

The following chart shows the waste diversion for the last nine years, including the percentage and totals tons of waste diverted.

	Total Waste	Waste Diverted at Xcel Waste to Energy		Diverted at the Landfill		Total Waste Diverted at the Landfill, HHM & Xcel	
Year	Tons	Tons	%	Tons	%	Tons	%
2018	159,681	41,383	58.92%	8,428	7.22%	51,361	32.16%
2017	168,243	42,733	59.00%	11,016	8.91%	55,488	32.98%
2016	184,097	47,085	62.84%	15,491	11.46%	64,382	34.97%
2015	176,244	47,346	63.06%	11,212	8.83%	60,390	34.27%
2014	159,477	39,397	62.05%	11,557	9.77%	52,579	32.97%
2013	162,922	42,202	55.86%	13,835	11.62%	57,511	35.30%
2012	138,408	47,101	63.66%	14,046	15.62%	62,519	45.17%
2011	155,737	43,204	59.28%	*22,377	20.17%	67,193	43.15%
2010	128,137	40,540	56.35%	13,040	15.14%	55,062	42.97%
2009	140,654	38,525	59.77%	16,180	16.07%	56,177	39.94%

* In 2011, severe storm damage in the La Crosse area resulted in the diversion and recycling, of an additional 9,000 tons of shingles.

Other Environmental Performance Indicators - Household Hazardous Materials Facility

La Crosse County Solid Waste Department operates a permanent, year round household hazardous and VSQG waste facility. The following chart shows the number of VSQG and household users and the pounds of waste collected from each.

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
VSQG (Small Business) Users	280	315	382	482	508
VSQG (Small Business) Waste (lbs.)	68,681	104,528	117,675	118,420	165,124
Household Users	7,893	9,047	9,735	10,008	10,955
Household Waste (lbs.)	455,242	561,827	626,468	639,003	766,718

The HHM program assisted with several off-site hazardous waste collection events in 2018. With the funding of the DATCP Clean Sweep grant, the La Crosse HHM program collaborated with four Wisconsin Counties: Crawford, Jackson, Trempealeau and Vernon. HHM staff traveled to locations within these counties and participated in one or two day collection events. In addition, HHM staff performed three hazardous waste collection events in Houston County, Minnesota on a fee for service basis. In all cases, collected waste was sorted, packaged, inventoried and transported back to the HHM facility for further processing. The following is a summary of 2018 HHM program off-site hazardous waste collection events.

Wisconsin DATCP			Houston Co. Minnesota		
Location	Participants	Weight Collected	Location	Participants	Weight Collected
Crawford Co.	264	2,976	Caledonia	42	2,611
Jackson Co.	94	3,081	Hokah	60	5,413
Trempealeau Co.	375	3,475	Houston	43	4,089
Vernon Co.	328	7,119			
TOTAL	1,061	16,651 lbs.	TOTAL	145	12,113 lbs.

Environmental Improvement Activities in 2018

- Land use planning and management activates on the landfill property:
 - Expanded on its partnership with a local non-profit, WisCorps to develop walking trails on landfill property that eventually will connect to other area trails. Specific planning has taken place to locate the trails and construction continue on another section in the community forest.
 - Worked with a Boy Scout (Eagle project) and other local businesses to construct a Bike repair/rest area along the walking trail.
 - Another Eagle Scout candidate constructed several duck nesting tubes that have been placed within several sedimentation basins within the landfill complex.
 - Worked with WisCorps to enhance wildlife habitat including elimination of invasive species on over 3 acres within the community forest.
 - Worked with Sunshine Love from Prairie Moon Nursery to improve prairie plantings on the landfill site.

- Constructed another half mile of hiking trails in the bluffs on the eastern portion of the landfill site.
- Community outreach and educational activities:
 - Conducting tours and educational programs for community leaders, area groups and the public. Nearly 1,040 people toured the landfill in 2018, and 260 people attended presentations by Solid Waste Department staff.
 - Assisted the Boy Scouts with a Scrap-A-Thon, which encouraged households and businesses to recycle metal scrap, donating the proceeds to the local Boy Scout Camp scholarship fund.
 - Educating in the community to increase the availability of opportunities to dispose of unwanted medications.
- Activities by the La Crosse County Sustainability Coordinator:
 - Participating as a board member of the Western Sustainability Institute and MPower project which oversees the sustainable business education program, and as staff to the La Crosse Sustainability Commission, a joint organization between the County and the Cities of La Crosse and Onalaska.
 - Facilitating the updating of county department's sustainability goals as well as giving the annual indicators report to the County board on accomplishments by departments. See attached report
 - Oversees the County's participation in the Green Tier Legacy Communities program.
 - Working with the universities on educational opportunities to use the landfill complex as a living lab.
 - Member of other local sustainability organizations such as the Friends of the Blufflands and the Friends of the Marsh.

Stakeholder Involvement

Because the La Crosse County Solid Waste Department is a public entity, there is a high level of transparency with the public and the Department's stakeholders. The La Crosse County, the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee have oversight authority over the Solid Waste Department. This committee meets monthly and these meetings are open to the public. The committee's agenda and meeting minutes are posted on the County's website and the local media covers its activities.

The La Crosse Disposal System has a Solid Waste Policy Board that provides representation to all member communities in the Disposal System and advises the Solid Waste Department on policy matters. This Board meets four times per year and is informed of all matters relevant to stakeholders, including the Departments EMS and Green Tier activities.

The La Crosse Disposal System Annual Meeting and quarterly meetings with the haulers also serve as opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback to the Solid Waste Department.

Compliance

The WDNR conducted solid waste and air inspections in 2018. There were no issues found.

Relationship with the WDNR

The La Crosse County Solid Waste Department had a positive working relationship with the WDNR prior to entering into the Green Tier Program. Participation in the Green Tier program has enhanced this relationship.